

*The Duty of universal Benevolence
enforced:*

IN THREE
S E R M O N S.

To which is prefixed

A Short A D D R E S S

To the LINCOLNSHIRE CLERGY.

By the Rev. H. HODGSON, B.A. *Pet. Coll. Camb.*
Curate of *Market Rasen.*

Be pitiful. Peter.

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The Director of the Board of Education

London

IN THE

OF THE



DEDICATION.

To the Rev. Mr. BARR,

Rector of *Owmby*.

REV. SIR,

ILL would it become one to enforce the most essential Duty of Christianity, that of Benevolence, the completion both of the Law and Gospel, whose breast feels not the sacred flame he wishes to excite, who is a stranger to the exalted pleasures of expressing Gratitude.

I might here 'such a Tale unfold,' as would extort the Blush of Modesty, while Truth would delightedly hear the Theme. But I forbear; though I cannot deny myself the supremest Satisfaction of thus publicly acknowledging the many, great, and UNALIENABLE advantages I have derived from you. When I feel fewest of the miseries, which as man, I am doomed to bear, I am not a little flattered by the friendly Regard you have shewn for me from my tenderest Years; and my melancholy Hours are, and ever will be cheered by the Reflection, that in the general Desertion of those Summer Insects — nominal Friends, you alone strove to pour into my tortured Breast

'The healing Balm that gen'rous pity yields.'

Believe me, Sir, I shall ever retain the most grateful sense of the various Obligations you have conferred upon me; and ceaselessly implore Heaven's choicest Blessings on you and your's.

I am,

Your very obliged Servant,

Rafen,
1, May, 1778.

Henry Hodgson.

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An ADDRESS

To the LINCOLNSHIRE CLERGY.

Rev. SIRs !

IF while the world is pestered with political jar-
rings, and the raging madness of party ; while
the most unchristian controversies are carried on
with heat, and productive of the most deadly ha-
tred in those breasts which ought to glow with the
warmest, the most unbounded benevolence and love
of whatsoever bears the same image and similitude
of our Creator with ourselves ; if, I say, in times
like these, there be any room to indulge the hope
that the still, small voice of reason, of nature, and
the most godlike affections should be attended to,
and its dictates duly revered, I would joyfully step
forth to assert their cause. And if the Almighty
has given me the power, would exert it in behalf
of those whom it is your duty as dispensers of
God's holy Word, as christians, and even abstract-
edly as men, to protect. I would excite you to
wipe the tear from the face of the orphan, and to
make the widow's heart to sing for joy.

The arguments which might be urged to induce
you to enter into a more liberal and general associ-
ation to relieve or preclude the wants, and all the
attendant miseries of the indigent widows and or-
phans of our fraternity, than any which is hither-

to established, are too numerous, cogent and obvious to need a particular enumeration here. The attempt would bear an air of impertinence which might probably injure the cause I most ardently wish to promote. I rejoice even in the possibility of success ; for I trust that good and salutary schemes need only be proposed, to be immediately realized.

Permit, then, one who, never having known the tender charities of husband and father, can have no private ends to serve by this address, to wish that some of you whose age, influence, knowledge of the world and the human heart, learning and abilities are much superior to his, would undertake the cause, armed with benevolence and zeal, to persevere until effects the most salutary were produced by restoring a comfortable subsistence to those who have lost the means of it (and of such there are not a few) with their fathers and husbands. Could such an one be excited to supersede my labours, I would joyfully retire into my original and proper obscurity ; and, were his endeavours crowned with success, would gladly enroll my name in the list of those who would most revere his virtues. To such an one it belongs to snatch the pitiable sufferers — all of whom have known better, happier days — from want, and to smooth their decline of life.

The case of those Clergymen who have little, or perhaps no real fortune to support their widows and children, when they may be taken away from them, is big with the greatest distress ; and, admitting them to be men of fine and delicate *feelings*, must embitter many of their moments, and make them go sorrowing. For (I appeal to husbands and parents in these circumstances) what distress can be greater, or more sensibly *felt*, than that of a loving,

ing, a beloved husband, a parent fond of his offspring beyond all names of fondness, anticipating the hour when he shall be taken away from his wife and helpless babes, leaving them hopeless, joyless, distressed—without the means of an easy subsistence,—without friends to protect them from the insults and buffetings of a cruel, unfeeling world, and to ward off ‘the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune’?

On their own efforts in conjunction with those of their brethren depends the removal of this distress. Their circumstances and situations in life may perhaps inevitably frustrate their endeavours to provide against those evils. Thence arises a claim upon the community. But miserable, indeed, must they be, who can derive much, never an adequate relief from so barren a source.

To provide for the wants of posterity is doubtless-ly an exalted pitch of virtue, far beyond the reach of sordid minds. I would flatter myself that men of your sacred character have risen to a greater height; That you can, and dare be virtuous without expecting or hoping to be rewarded in your pilgrimage through this world; That you can patiently wait for it in the glory that shall be revealed at the resurrection of the sons of the just. The Almighty, indeed seems almost to have implanted the seeds of soft compassion in our breasts, and endowed us with an irresistible impulse of compassion; rendering the BEST part of our species subservient to his gracious designs of promoting universal happiness. He thus constitutes the feeling breast a kind of subaltern providence. It is impossible that these men should behold human miseries without exerting their powers to remove the cause of sorrow, to still the throbbings of the afflicted heart, and to wipe away the flowing tear.

Thus hath our beneficent Creator provided for the relief of the wretched. And from perfecting this benevolent disposition must spring the greatest happiness that is compatible with an imperfect state ; for the supremest felicity not only of the present, but also of the future world, consists in the imitation of God ; that is, in exerting all our faculties to enlarge the sum of human happiness, and to diminish the evils which are the attendants on mortality. After all our exertions, thousands will be left to suffer, because only Omnipotence can entirely alter the human condition. Let us then as we prize private happiness earnestly strive to render all our fellow creatures happy.

Lincolnshire contains about 600 parishes, whence I conclude that our number can scarcely be less than 200. The widows of our predecessors who are left in destitute, forlorn circumstances are probably as many. At the tribunal of truth I shall be acquitted of exaggeration if I apply the Lines of the poet to some of them.*

She, wretched matron, forc'd, in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggots from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn.

Goldsmith.

The orphans of the late clergy of this county who were left to experience similar distresses are perhaps twice that number. They were early bereft of a father's needful assistance ; their case calls loudly for relief, and if we have not entirely divested ourselves of the bowels of compassion they will not call in vain.

The

* Mrs. Crow. Relict of the Rev. Bulkley Crow, who was succeeded in the Rectory of Spridlington by the late Chancellor Reynolds, is among other still living proofs that this is not exaggeration. She is maintained by that Parish. Their Son residing there is an instance of the truth of the next paragraph.

The distress of these widows will be much heightened by considering the happiness from which they are fallen. And I would hope our desire of relieving them and securing others from the like calamities will also encrease proportionably.

Their youth, when hardships, though real, are scarcely felt, was generally crowned with at least easy circumstances. How deplorable is the reverse! Their age, of which the natural evils are scarcely tolerable, is loaded with the adscititious pressure of want and poverty. They drag out a wretched existence.

The Clergy of a neighbouring† county have set us a noble example; let us not disdain to follow it. They have already stretched forth a munificent hand to help the indigent widows and orphans of their fraternity. For that purpose have they raised large funds by generous, almost princely subscriptions, and are become a body corporate, capable of allowing comfortable subsistence to the destitute.

While I acknowledge them to be worthy of the fairest wreaths of praise, I do not mean to censure you for so long delaying to imitate so laudable an Exemplar. I am rather delighted to confess that something similar is done amongst us. Thence sprung, and thence were indulged, my hopes of exciting you to equal, if not surpass them in generosity.

Amongst us, at present, contributions are not so generous that any considerable advantage should accrue from them. Being too small to raise a sufficient fund, were they accumulating at compound interest, together with the yearly increase of principal, for a whole century. I believe that it is customary throughout the county to levy subscriptions
at

† Huntingdonshire.

at the Easter Visitation. Few or none give more than a half guinea. Curates generally nothing. I have even known some narrow-hearted Vicars, rich in this world's goods, refuse so small a pittance—O Shame where is thy bluth! O Charity where shalt thou be found, when banished from the bosoms of the propagators of that Gospel, whose chief design was to meliorate our dispositions, to make us kind and compassionate as our heavenly father is kind and compassionate! I speak with tenderness; for to one of this stamp I acknowledge myself to be under considerable obligations; otherwise I should think the most acrimonious expressions too lenient.

From hence I think that scarcely more than 63 pounds are thus yearly collected in the County. What efficacious relief can accrue to so many persons from this pitiful sum? The case certainly requires much larger and more munificent subscriptions. One GENEROUS effort would set them above want. Are we men? are we christians?—Let us not defer the time of doing good to all. Let us by one exertion become the friends and benefactors of those who have none to help them. Let us wipe away all tears from off their faces, knowing assuredly that those “who are rich in this world, and are ready to give, and glad to distribute, lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life.”

Rafen,

28 April, 1778.

This Day is published, price 6d.

L E T T E R S to Mrs. KINDERSLEY, by the Rev. H. HODGSON, B. A.

Speedily will be published, price 3s. 6d. to Nonsubscribers.

E F F U S I O N S of the HEART and FANCY, In Verse and Prose, by the Rev. H. HODGSON.

Addenda to the Address to the Clergy.

IT behoves the true practical philanthropist never to omit the opportunity of benefiting his fellow creatures, and by any means to relieve the wretched, to alleviate their distress ; for every action that originates from such a cause must be virtuous, and productive of the sublimest self-satisfaction.

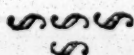
If, as some have suggested, there be no reason to hope that sufficiently generous subscriptions will ever be established voluntarily—let me add a word or two to our present worthy prelates ; to them it belongs in a particular manner to take the subject into their most serious consideration ;—a consideration which I would willingly expect should be productive of the most salutary ends, by their being unanimous in the cause of humanity and benevolence.

To you, then, ye worthy prelates ! doth it belong to bring a bill into parliament, to effectuate a legal provision for the necessitous widows and orphans of the Clergy. In such a proceeding there is no room to expect an opposition in either house. Deign at least to hear what I propose. It is briefly thus : That every Clergyman when instituted to a benefice of what kind soever worth fifty pounds per annum shall pay into your hands two guineas towards raising a fund, and that the said benefice shall be charged with the yearly quit rent of a half guinea for the same purpose. Provided the benefice be worth an hundred pounds *per Ann.* the presen-

presentee shall pay four guineas at the time of institution, and one guinea yearly. If the annual value of the benefice be one hundred and twenty-five pounds, he shall deposit when instituted three guineas, and it shall be charged with the yearly deduction of one pound six shillings for the same very desirable end ; and so on in proportion.

That the real value of ecclesiastical benefices may be accurately ascertained, Let it be enacted that the presentee shall produce a certificate signed by at least two *respectable* clergymen residing the nearest to it purporting, That after due enquiry they believe the annual value of the rectory or vicarage of *** in the county of ** and diocese of *** to be *** pounds *** shillings *** pence. That every clergyman shall also be obliged to produce a similar certificate of the value of his present preferment. That the trustees shall be compelled by the act to allow at least four per cent for the principal ; as one per cent will be a sufficient stipend after a few years.

From such a legal procedure I am persuaded that infinitely great advantages would accrue than from music meetings, clubbs, &c. The obligation presents itself in too strong a point of view to need an enforcement. I quit the subject, offering up a devout and fervent prayer that it may tend to produce the desired end. My design will secure me from the oblique attacks of censure. If it fail, I shall comfort myself with considering that man cannot command success, it is sufficient to deserve it.



*The Duty of universal Benevolence
enforced.*

S E R M O N I.

Matt. vii. 12.

*Whatsoever ye would have men to do unto you,
do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the
prophets.*

OUR Saviour having given us, in the two preceeding chapters, a summary of the duties required of us to inherit eternal life.—Duties which even independent of this effect, deserve to be carefully cultivated, because they are productive of glory to God in the highest, and on earth of peace and good will towards men,—in the words of the text gives a grand and comprehensive idea of the whole. As if he had said, Refuse not your benevolent assistance to those that require it. Examine the wants, miseries and distresses of every station in life. Suppose yourselves to be thus needy, miserable, distressed. Consider how you would wish to be relieved by those whose situations in life may enable them to extricate you. This is to know how ye would that all men should behave unto you—Even so behave ye to them, and thus fulfil the most important duty, nay the sum and substance of all religion.

It

It may be necessary to confirm this interpretation of the text by observing, that the Jews divided the scriptures of the Old Testament into four parts, *namely*, The Law, the Greater Prophets, the Lesser Prophets, the Holy, or Moral Writings. The first three contained those which exhibit matters of faith, religion and ceremony; and by a figure of speech not uncommon in all languages, Jesus uses the expression *the law and the prophets* for what they teach, that is, the sum and substance of religious and moral duties.

I proceed to enforce the observance of this our most essential duty to behave to all men in what situation or condition soever, with the same kindness and benevolence which we wish to experience from them, were we in their circumstances

When we reflect on the various wants, and imperfections of our nature,—when we observe that the life of the most fortunate of mankind is short and full of misery—Melancholy truths of which we must all be sufficiently convinced by sad experience!—We can no more doubt of the propriety of uniting in “the bonds of civil society,” which we wear as chains of loveliest ornament, than of our own existence. And if we consider the ends for which society was at first instituted, and for which it is continued—*namely* for mutual protection, and to procure advantages that could never be had in a state of nature, we have a powerful argument highly pertinent to my present purpose. While our nature was bold, rough and cruel, not refined by the exquisite sense of *right*, nor acquainted with the moral duties, the strong possessed the fairest lot of the creation. If his neighbour’s dwelling had charms to captivate his fancy, he expelled him from his native habitations; thus destitute, he was obliged to seize the abode of one
who

who was weaker, more defenceless than himself.* They could not long be blinded to inconveniences and fatal consequents of those inroads ; and for protection against the *strong* and *violent* the *weak* resigned part of their liberties to the crafty and subtle, for in those ages wisdom had not found a place in the world. Thence arose the very different conditions of mankind. And from thence each order derives a powerful, an irresistible claim to the benevolence of the whole. Thus incorporated, antient Rome became the mistress of nations—Her citizens felt the whole force of this claim ; and their exemplary benevolence, often, if not always, divested of every regard to self, demands our wonder, esteem and imitation. We christians have stronger incentives to the exercise of this duty, because we see clearly what they had no certainty of, that the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked punished in a future state of existence. Their great, good and wise men, when sinking beneath the miseries which as men they were doomed to bear, earnestly wished that it might be so ; and invented several plausible arguments to confirm their favourite opinion ; but they were only *plausible* ; and the severity of reason and reflexion generally destroyed the beautiful superstructure. *We* are assured of it by revelation ; there is pointed out the means of attaining its blessings which infinitely exceed all we can desire or expect. We are commanded to perfect virtue, by behaving to others with the same kind affections and sublimated benevolence, which we wish them to exercise in our behalf.

Long hath it been an established maxim, and its foundation is in truth, that to be virtuous is to be
happy.

* This seems to have been nearly the case of the Goths, and other Northern Emigrants, who about the beginning of the V Century deluged *all* Europe, and subverted the Western Empire.

happy. Virtue consists in an exact observance of the will of God, whether our knowledge of it be deduced from reason or revelation. By the mediation of his Son Jesus Christ has he assured us, that benevolence, extended to every individual of our race, impels to the practice of, nay includes every religious and moral duty. Happiness therefore is certainly designed by the beneficent Creator for man's portion in this world. The desire of happiness is the principle, if not the only incentive to action; for did we not promise ourselves the highest satisfaction that a rational creature is capable of enjoying, why need we toil laborious days, and waste our health in tedious nightly cares? Were it not better to repose on the silken lap of indolence? wiser to listen to the soft blandishments of pleasure? Have we our reason only to deafen us to the voice of hope; to convince us that when man seeketh for happiness he pursueth a vain shadow? Must the disappointment of *all* our longings for, and ardent pantings after felicity be added to the inevitable evils to which mortality is obnoxious? The generality, indeed, of human pursuits terminate in disappointment. On the folly of our choice may be charged this failure, for the object of our wishes is at best empty and transient: such are fame, wealth and honours; and as these are too often attained by deviating from, perhaps acting in direct opposition to, some important duty, we cannot wonder to find that they are by no means connected with happiness.

Still farther to confirm the opinion that the exercise of the benevolent affections is productive of, or indeed, is itself our truest felicity, let us make an appeal to the generous feelings of the heart, uncorrupted by the baser passions. Let us reflect on the time when we beheld misery with a tearful eye

eye — When we relieved it, and felt sensations of delight, almost equal in degree to those which our most exalted ideas of the happiness of angels can suggest to us. Even when we have nothing to bestow on the wretched, but unavailing pity, our self-satisfaction is proportional to its source—a heaven-like feeling. Did we sufficiently think of this, we should need no other inducement to behave to all mankind with such endearing kindness, as would force even the most savage and malevolent to assume virtues unknown to them in our behalf. Thus should we be happy ourselves, and scatter happiness on all around us.

From such an appeal we shall find that we are naturally benevolent; that those baleful passions, which bid us rejoice at the miseries of creatures of like feelings with ourselves, are late acquired, and only disturb our more mature years. Before our breasts are deluged with passion and prejudice, we listen delightedly to the recital of such actions as are beneficial to any particular set of men, with whom we have no connections, of whom we know little more, than that they exist. — By irresistible impulse are we led to participate their felicity, as we partake of their nature.

Why are we charmed with the history of those few generous patriots, who, zealously steadfast in bearing ill and doing good, preferred the welfare of their co-citizens before their own interests, even their lives, if benevolence be not more agreeable to our nature, than the affections which prompt us to take pleasure in the evils of our kind?

The breast which is most entirely swayed by the kind affections is impregnable to the attacks of anger, and its dreadful train. The benevolent man views all his fellows—creatures with love similar

to that of the parent for a beloved child; and, consequently, the happiness of each individual augments his own, while all their afflictions distress him. He is benign; he cherishes no other ambitious thoughts, than the god-like ones of *doing good*; he is not ostentatious, nor inflated with insolence. Conscious of the excellence and dignity of human nature, he is apt to behold every failing with a generous candour. He praises virtue—His whole life exhibits it in the fairest—its native dress. He pities and uses his every effort to recall the thoughtless wanderers from their duty to the state their folly forfeited, to righteousness and its blessed effects, peace and assurance for evermore.

Thus is he certified of God's favour and acceptance, he therefore exultingly anticipates the hour when his spirit shall return to God who gave it; knowing that this virtue survives even death. It forms the most exalted part of the happiness, which the souls of good men made perfect shall enjoy in the regions of eternity. Then hope is lost in the fullness of possession; † The firmest reliance upon God in certainty. But benevolence is the eternal bond which shall bind the creature to his creator, and to the saints who have been since the world began.

Was the present life the whole of our existence, including the sum of our hopes and fears, it would be no less necessary that we should behave to others as we would have them behave to us, because happiness is the only object of our desires. It would behove us to felicitate this little dawn of life, no less for the sake of others than our own, and to perfect the benevolent affections of the souls;

† Divines have so prostituted the word *Faith* that it seldom, or never raises an idea of its scriptural signification in the unenlightened mind. Thence arose my quarrel with the English word *Faith*; and for that cause I always carefully avoid using it. — *The Divinity Idea of Faith at present is somewhat similar to the heathen one in two points at least in being absurd & unintelligible. See Proclus in Platon. lib. 1 cap. 25 p. 61*

soul; for experience shews, that the supremest internal satisfaction owes its origin to these affections. The obligation, therefore, still remains the same independent of the knowledge of a future state. But thanks be to thee, O merciful God! *Thou* hast given us the surest ground of belief, that if we continue stedfast and immoveable in pursuing the rewards of holiness, and always abound in works of mutual love (in which alone we can resemble Thee) our labours shall *NOT* be in vain.

Further, it will not be denied, that to secure future happiness ought to be the principle, I might say only care of reasonable beings. What happiness can be superior to the favour of the Creator and Preserver of all things both in heaven and earth? *Divines and Philosophers of all ages and sects have agreed in this at least, that human perfection consists in the entire conformity of our several faculties and powers with the will of God. The whole of his *will* is, that we in every respect do to others what *we* would have them do to us. Benevolence, therefore, is the highest summit of human happiness and perfection. To indulge the opposite passions envy, hatred, malice and revenge, is to plunge into the depth of depravity and misery.

In vain may it be objected, that moral philosophers have made self love the spring of all our actions. Truth and experience were their guides. They have affirmed, that to augment our own private happiness alone can have force sufficient to excite us to execute our designs. At the same time when we allow the justness of the proposition,

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we

* See an excellent Work entitled, The Theory of agreeable Sensations. Chap. 6. I know not why this Treatise has fallen so much below the rank which its merit should secure it in the philosophical library.

we declare that it is no objection. A candid examination will shew that self-love by no means looses the obligation to universal and efficacious benevolence. Strength is added to it. What actions can be more worthy self-love than those which meliorate the soul, which wipe the tears from the eyes of orphans, and make the widow's heart to sing for joy? To secure the blessing of the wretched and miserable by soothing their cares, relieving their distresses and endeavouring to render them happy, is worthy a rational being who only acts on selfish principles; these are his duty; and as the seeds of soft compassion take deep root in the human heart, so it must be his duty to cultivate them till they overshadow the whole of his Creator's works.

Some have urged that we cannot forbear rejoicing at the calamities and misfortunes, which overtake our enemies, even though they be such as make them go sorrowing all their lives long. It is natural to consider them as private happiness. To these a reply would be needless, for their spirit is totally different from the spirit of christianity; their disposition affords not the least hope that they will ever be induced to acknowledge the force of the obligations of virtue. I will only suggest to them that the sensations which arise from contemplating on human evils are so far from felicity, that they give an additional weight to their misery.

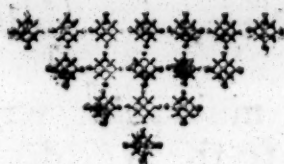
We possess a sovereign power over our own affections. We may therefore deserve the good will of our fellow-creatures. We may subdue the malignity of the injurious by heaping acts of undeserved generosity and benevolence upon his head. Thus shall we compel him to admire our mild forbearance; this admiration, by degrees, will heighten in-

into esteem and love; hence he will endeavour on all occasions to promote our welfare. And the Almighty will reward the forgiveness of a brother's trespasses with pardoning our offences against himself; for "if we forgive one another, then will God pardon our sins; but if we forgive not one another, then will not God pardon our sins."

"A new commandment, said our Lord Jesus, do I give unto you, that ye love one another." This he makes the test by which men should know them to be his disciples. His own life exhibited an amiable example of benevolence; nor was the humane disposition of his soul relaxed in the anticipation, no, not even in midst of his sufferings. He entreated his weeping friends to spare their tears for a more dreadful occasion, the desolation which then impended over their friends, their children, their country. He resigned his breath in a devout and forgiving prayer for his persecutors and murderers. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."—By the express command of holy writ we are bound to imitate his example, to obey his precepts, and consequently to behave to others, as we wish them to behave to us.

Have we been miserable, wretched, distressed? Let us look out into the world, and relieve those who groan beneath the afflictions which we have borne. Every one, even the lowest of the sons of men, may contribute towards rendering the whole species happy. Do we not daily encounter many pains and disquietudes? Let us exert our abilities to remove the like causes of uneasiness from our brethren. Are we not disquieted with the attacks of hunger and thirst? fatigued with labour doth not our spirit sink within us? Happy are we, if we possess the means of relieving these our own

wants ; but happier, much more happy, if we can and *do* dispense relief to our afflicted brethren. From the nature and design of civil society, from the pleasure which springs from acts of kindness and benevolence, they have a claim to such assistance. From our own feelings we must be convinced that we should wish for the relief of those, who are able to extricate us, and we are taught by the voice of nature and reason, whether we regard ourselves abstractedly as men, or as members of society, that this is our duty. But when we consider ourselves as Christians, we are bound by the express command of Jesus Christ to do unto all men even as we would have them do unto us.

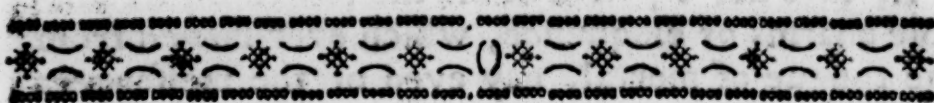


*The Duty of universal Benevolence
enforced.*

S E R M O N II.

Preached at *Rafen*

On WEDNESDAY the 27 of DECEMBER, 1775.



1 Corinth. xiii. 13.

*Now remain Faith, Hope and Charity : these three, but the greatest of these is Charity.****

A Grosser want of judgment in him, who divided the New Testament into the modern chapters, is no where to be found, than in the instance before us. The words which immediately follow have so close a connection† with the text, that I believe an apology for attempting to restore them to the sense, the Apostle evidently designed them to bear, will not be requisite. I think they ought to be re-adjoined and read as a positive precept, which will run thus. Now remain faith, hope and charity, these three, but the greatest or most excellent is charity — follow charity,

To see the force and propriety of this connection in the strongest point of view, we need only consider the whole chapter. From thence we shall be more fully led into the Apostle's meaning ; and discover that is rather an affection of the mind, than action, which he wisheth to inculcate. That affection, indeed, is productive of the most virtuous and laudable deeds which man can perform.

If,

† I am astonished that the very judicious and accurate Critic, J. A. Bengelius hath not rejected the common division in this, as in many other places and restored the text to the Apostle's meaning. Nor do I wonder less that Dr. Harwood retains all the vulgar divisions. His

If, says he, I possessed all the powerful, irresistible charms of eloquence, which ever flowed from the tongue of mortal, nay even of the messengers of God, whose order in the immense scale of beings is highly superior to that of man — if able to predict all future events — If I had all knowledge and science, or so exalted reliance upon God as would enable me to remove mountains, or perform any equally stupendous miracle, — or so exquisite feelings as to “weep and bleed at every tender tale of woe” — or did I give all my goods to relieve the distressed, to remove the wants of the poor *Unfortunate*, — yet excellent and amiable as these gifts of eternal Providence and this disposition might be, if not accompanied with another complete virtue, namely, Charity, I should fall very short of the perfection required by the gospel of Christ.

Charity is patient in suffering. Persecution's frightfullest form can never abate its ardour. It is impregnable to the attacks of envy, and every other baleful, peace-destroying passion. It teaches men to consider the deportment of all the human race in the most favourable, the friendliest light, and thus to deduce every action from the most praise-worthy motives. It patiently beareth with the imperfections of those with whom its possessors
are

edition of the Greek Testament, and the epistolical part of his Liberal Translation, or concise paraphrase of the New Testament would have been inestimable if the text were printed according to Bengelius's plan, with the various lections of all the most authoritative MSS, and the parallel places of Mill Wetstein, &c. Such an edition is much wanted. Pity it is that neither Bowyer nor Harwood have given it to the publick. Their learning and critical acumen would have enabled them to do it with success. If nothing of the kind be produced, when a few years more have matured my judgment, I will undertake the laudable task — But am not without hopes that some one possessed of greater learning and abilities, whose situation in life is much more propitious to such an undertaking than mine is ever likely to be, will be induced to exert himself, and effectually preclude the necessity of my attempt.

are connected and striveth to conceal them. It rejoiceth in the successes of the righteous.

Charity is gentle, benign; equally ignorant of the tormenting sensations of pride, insolence and wrathful emulations.

Most, I might perhaps say all, other Virtues seem to tend to some particular end, and with the attainment cease to exist. Thus prophecy or the gift of knowing future events shall fail. The tongue which now charms the world with all the powers of eloquence, and manly reason shall be silenced in the grave. The most perfect and extensive knowledge, whether human or divine, shall vanish away, and leave no wreck behind; for all wisdom is suited to the frailty and imperfection of mortal intellects. Our existence in this world may be regarded as the Infancy of our rational faculties, which in the future state shall be exalted to the summit of perfection. In that state, also, reliance upon God will be absorbed in certainty; Hope in the possession of the fulness of joy, and the pleasures which are the destined rewards of the sons of the just; but charity shall still remain the same. Whence it evidently follows, that it is the most excellent of these three virtues. Let your chiefest care therefore, be to perfect charity. It follows from the premises that it is in your power to possess it here, and that the exercise of it forms so exalted a portion of the happiness of the souls of the just made perfect.

In some cases, though not in the present, it might be pertinently urged, That such rhapsodies, as this chapter in its common state, very frequently occur in Asiatic writers; and that they are more likely to promote the cause of duty, than a cool train of arguments. They exhibit virtue in the loveliest—its native colours. Cold and callous, indeed, must that

that breast be, which they warm not into admiration, and the wish of being virtuous.

Such probably, is the frequent effect of this chapter; for what words can give charity more animated, animating charms than those of the apostle?

After having spoke to the affections * in the most insinuating and captivating terms he addresses the understanding—follow charity.

This was his scope and design. His energy resembles the lightening; we cannot resist its force. For to creatures situated like us charity (the unlimited love of ALL our kind—for the word which is here rendered *Charity* is generally translated *Love*, tho' *Benevolence* conveys a more adequate idea of its signification) independant of revelation must be a *desireable* virtue. Revelation indeed has enlarged its boundaries, and taught to nourish Benevolence, to subdue the grovelling selfish passions so effectually, as to wish, nay strenuously endeavour to argument the happiness of all mankind, even though such a behaviour in several respects, may be productive of temporary disadvantages to ourselves. This is the rule of life exhibited by our saviour, and consequently is productive of our greatest final felicity.

Considering ourselves as creatures of a day, a variety of powerful arguments obtrude themselves to prove, that it is not good for man to be alone.

If infinity and perfection be the measure of the attributes of God, he cannot act in vain: for that would evince imperfection.—He hath endowed us with several powers and faculties which if we were made to be alone, or if not designed for society, would be useless that is, granted in vain.

For

* In this chapter St. Paul seems to have inhaled the spirit of Pindar, expressing the dictates of the holy Spirit in the sublime manner of the Theban Bard. Such sublimity of diction seldom occurs in the New Testament.

For if destined to rove alone, to shun each other, what would be the utility of reason? what pleasures which could spring from speech, a power perhaps more than the former, distinguishes us from the beasts that perish?

These with several other human faculties and powers can only be exerted in society. Therefore we cannot doubt but social was the mode of existence for which God designed us.

In all our intercourses with our fellow creatures we are compelled to acknowledge that a behaviour consistent with the line of duty equally augments the happiness of ourselves, of our more immediate relatives and of the whole community. Thus our *feelings* seem to be powerful incentives to the practice of virtue. But they are not sufficiently strong. The glorious effects which we might reasonably expect from them is too often counteracted by the storms of passion; their exquisite delicacy deadened by the mists of sense. In the happy intervals when both subside, we wonder by what infatuation they gained dominion over us. We determine to yield to them no more, but to pursue the paths of duty with the most inflexible intrepidity. Happy would it be, were the determination permanent. But, in this respect, our righteousness may be too justly assimilated to that of Ephraim, which “is as † a cloud of the morning, and passeth away like the early dew.”

The world every where abounds with objects to exercise our compassion. Wheresoever we cast our eyes, we shall behold many of our fellow men groaning beneath a load of miseries, which no prudence could have prevented, and from which no efforts of their own can extricate them. Perhaps we may find a creature of like passions and sensibility

† Hosea vi, 4.

lity with ourselves, ruined by a train of disasters—persecuted for having been unfortunate by wretches who make a mock of mercy and forgiveness. See him dragged from every tender charity which could solace his misfortunes—from his heart-rent spouse—from his weeping babes—weeping perhaps for bread, which his honest labours can supply them with no longer. He is shut up within the narrow bounds of a prison. Murderers his companions. Denied the common gifts of heaven—the genial influence of the sun—the wholesome air—the use of his own limbs.—Instead of these, all the gloomy horrors of distress—Noxious damps seize upon him.—He is no less oppressed by external evils.—apprehension adds its every sting—heightens *his* sorrows by representing those of his defenceless babes.

Surely his sorrowful sighing will gratefully ascend to the throne of the infinitely good and merciful *God*, and be had in everlasting memorial against his persecutors.

For the honour of mankind would I hope, that sorrows like these would have some effect upon the hardest heart; that only a very few, the most depraved and infamous of the species, who have entirely erased the few remaining marks of infinite perfection from their souls, could suppress the tender throb of pity, or fortify themselves against the inroads of compassion.—How dwelleth the love of God in such an one ?

When we behold a scene of misery like this, inverted by some benevolent interposition we are transported with joy, which by excess becomes almost painful. But, to the shame of mankind be it spoken ! we seldom § see so bright examples of
virtue,

§ The Author doth not mean to derogate from the singular virtues of the Members of that unfortunate philanthropist, Dr. Dodd's Socie-

virtue, so finished a transcript of perfection.

The changes and chances of this mortal life which we have already experienced, will convince us that flight and easily evertable is the strongest pile of human happiness, that tho' at present Prosperity may shed its selectest influence upon us, and every thing apparently conspire our welfare—yet a few days may destroy all our expectations, blast our fairest hopes, deprive us of every earthly comfort and support, and reduce the prince from the palace to the dunghill. Whence the *Thinking* person can never behold the miseries of any individual with satisfaction. On the contrary these considerations will warm his breast with the love of all the human race, and impel him to benefit them. That “sunshine of the breast,” the applauses of a conscience void of offence towards man will soothe each affliction that attacks the benevolent heart.

The pleasures which spring from benevolence are sufficient to alleviate the many evils which must fall to our share in travelling thro' this vale of tears to that land where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest. But even here they cease not. Christianity extends the prospect to eternity.

The criterion or rule by which we must judge of christian perfection is the most perfect imitation of Jesus, transfusing into our own, every virtue and grace which adorned his character.

Candour must acknowledge that the love of man was invariably his incentive. This passion extorted the tear of anticipating sympathy when he beheld the
city,

ty for the relief of prisoners for small debts. The Doctor's shining abilities, his long and zealous labours to felicitate the human condition, and to promote the eternal welfare of his fellow creatures, the remembrance of his fate, culpable as he was, will ever extort a tear from the eye of Benevolence.

city and the tenderly pathetic exclamation, O that thou—even thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace! What but this, could move him to endeavour the happiness of mankind incessantly; to restore the dead to their weeping friends and relations; to give sight to the blind—hearing to the deaf—speech to the dumb—strength to the lame and infirm—new limbs to those who had lost their original ones?

Transcendently bright, indeed, is the pattern. And one would think that the contemplation of it should not a little tend to impress our minds with the love of mankind. “The *sympathetic feeling of virtue” also should strongly impel to perfect what such an example must happily have begun, and to expand the beneficent affections of the souls to a kind of infinity.

What shall I do, said the young man, to inherit eternal life? Jesus replied not in the strain of modern fanatics. He commanded him to love God with all his heart, with all his mind, and with all his strength; and his neighbour as himself. More he adds not; but closes the conference with, **THIS DO, AND THOU SHALT LIVE.**

The Apostle to the Hebrews, in conformity with the general tenour of our saviour’s precepts, has declared, that to do good is a sacrifice well pleasing to God. Those actions only which benefit our kind deserve the name of *good*. They are most assuredly the immediate effect of that benevolence which most empassions the human Heart.

Abundance of historical proofs might be exhibited that none but the benevolent man has ever been capable of any generous pitch of virtue. While the vices of the benificent seem to be only the effects

* See Lord Kaims’ Elements of Criticism, Part I. Ch. 2. § 4

fects of imperfection. A sudden start from the line of duty, though like the elastic chord, they rest not until it is regained.

By the Lord of Life, who *loved* us, and gave himself for us, we are commanded to love, our enemies, to invoke the blessing of God upon those who cruelly and despitefully use us. To be imitators of him, as he is of the God, whose very essence is benevolence §

In a work which deservedly is, and ever will be esteemed amongst the most astonishing efforts of human genius, it is observed, that "the † happiness, surpassing all conception which is prepared for the righteous in heaven springs from the gratification of our benevolence." The cultivation of it, therefore, during our journeyings thro' this world must secure the greatest happiness which is compatible with the imperfection of our nature. It will excite such sentiments as produce the *very Perfection of Virtue*. And consequently render us fit for the Regions where all is peace. and joy, and benevolence eternal.

Let us then, my brethern, while we have opportunity do good unto all men; especially let us endeavour to relieve our miserable, unfortunate brethren; thus *casting our bread upon many waters,
being

§ 1 John iv. 8. The Charity or Benevolence mentioned in the Text.

† Dr. Hartley's Observations on Man.

Vol. II. Page 433

* Eccles. xi. 1. I have given the Words of the common Translation, though judgement approveth them not; for the Idea is entirely lost in the Expression. Probably it excites no rational idea in an European mind. I will hazard a conjecture, which perhaps may be original. The Text will bear another, more reasonable Version, in the following Words. Sow thy Seed in well-watered (fruitful) Ground, and at the appointed Season (Harvest) thou shalt reap an infinite Increase. I may have stumbled upon the common Explication of Commentators. They are a race to whom I pay little regard (excepting Dr. Lightfoot and Bishop Lowth's prelections on Hebrew Poetry—on the Old Testa-

being fully assured by the word of **ETERNAL TRUTH**, that at the appointed season it shall return with infinite increase.

ment Locke, &c. Benson, Taylor, Pierce, Hallet, Sykes, Le Clerc's, Hammond and Chandler on the New. The former for their attention to the Jewish Customs, the latter to the Law of Reason) knowing that I must be judged not according to the talent delivered to them, but to that given to myself.—“An ounce of a person's own reason is worth a tun of any other's.”

The

to

*The Duty of universal Benevolence
enforced.*

S E R M O N I I I ,

Preached at *Rafen* on Wednesday the 10 *June*,
M.DCC.LXXVIII.



Job. v. 7.

Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards.

WHEN we cast our eyes upon this passage, so fond are we of our golden dreams of earthly happiness, it is with difficulty that we allow its truth in theory ; in practice never. For early do we acquire a pleasing, deluding hope of seeing better, happier days, of which, groundless as it is, the wisest, best of men can never entirely divest themselves. Thence it happens that most behave as if they believed every distant scene of life strewed with the rosebuds of delight.

And yet the slightest reflexion on every past stage and period of our lives irresistibly urges the melancholy truth, that all we can expect in travelling thro' this vale of sorrow is to enjoy for a few moments a brighter, a serener *distant* prospect. But it soon vanishes, and leaves us hopeless, joyless to wander thro' the mazes of life to that land whither all tend, and where all things but virtue are forgotten.

To prove this we need only to review the life of man impartially. We must not take our notions, on the one hand, from the favourites of Fortune ; nor on the other, from those who have encountered her fiercest frowns, and gone all their lives long sorrowing. From either extream our

opinions will be equally fallacious. For though permanent happiness be the lot of none, few are they who have always been wretched. Indeed we shall nowhere find reason to contradict the assertion of Job, yet, must acknowledge that generally the life of man is chequered by the returns of felicity and misery, that happy circumstances and calamitous events succeed each other like day and night. Perhaps painful experience will compel us to confess that the scale of misery frequently preponderates.

How can that Being, then, who placed man in such a situation be beneficent ?

Exceedingly difficult, if not altogether inexplicable, is the question to the light of nature. To solve it rationally the sages of antiquity erected on weak foundations the doctrine of a future state. They adorned the hypothesis with every charm of eloquence. While their addresses charmed the fancy, and were founded on the most ardent wish of the whole species, they stole into the heart ; and the belief became general. Their particular opinions concerning it were dissonant ; all very erroneous. But the doctrine was not without the most salutary influence on their lives and moral conduct. It powerfully excited them to an arduous pitch of several of the most admirable and amiable virtues. It animated them with the love of praise-worthy actions—gave them fortitude to surmount every obstacle, to despise each danger and difficulty which lay in the path of duty. And, though the voice of Nature persuaded them that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, taught them to expect that they should not lose their reward.

But it is not here my province to enter into a disquisition on the Heathen incentives to virtue. I am to give the out-lines of a real picture of life with

without reference to any particular state or condition. Such as is common to by far the greatest part of every rank, whence the duty of relieving accidental calamities will obviously follow. It will exhibit the doctrine of a future state in the strongest light; it will tend to wean our affections from this world, and fix them upon that where grief and trouble shall no more embitter our existence.

In childhood, it is true, we feel fewest of the thousand direful ills which flesh and flesh is heir to, yet even then we find evident traces of the curse pronounced against our first parents; that they should eat their bread in sorrow till they return to the dust out of which they were taken.

Man, the last, noblest effort of God's visible creation, cometh into the world in a more helpless, destitute condition, than most of his fellow inhabitants of the earth. His faculties, and all his boasted powers proceed much slower, and by imperceptible degrees to their last perfection. If unsupported by a parent's kindly care, long would they crawl, like some humble plant, upon the earth, scarcely partaking of any but the very meanest benefits and privileges of animal existence. The earth, which bountifully affords the means of subsistence to every other creature, supplies not their wants. Soon would they perish and sink back into their dust.

But here we offer what might be, rather than what is. None are thus exposed. But this state of imbecility, which at least is real, proves that man, surrounded with weaknesses and imperfections, is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards.

In this state the parent's watchful eye and anxious attendance are often vain. They cannot preserve us from fatal dangers; from disasters, which, if we escape with life, render the whole
Many,

of our lives painful and irksome.

Many, and very dangerous are the diseases which furiously assail our infantine constitutions. Scarcely could the vigour of manhood unhurt sustain them. Unable to resist their force the infant becomes death's easy prey, and like the forward flower, which appears before the wintry storms are past, but shews itself, and is thrivelled into nothing. But if the frame be so firmly compacted as to repel these attacks, yet they prove the seeds of future ones, which at last inevitably sink us into the grave.

In proportion to our progress in life, evils and calamities increase upon us.

In the next period our faculties approach towards maturity. They but more fully evince that few and fleeting are those days which seem to smile upon us. Then our nature is open, generous, sincere.—Unconscious of bad designs—apt to believe, because void of guile and deceit, youth is the easy prey of artful and designing villany. His love of the species not a little contributes to this end. Though he finds them the sources of many inconveniencies and real embarrassments, he is unwilling to change his good and friendly opinions of his fellow creatures. He is, indeed, compelled to acknowledge, that he has found a few worthless, deceitful individuals — his soul burns with indignation against them — He hopes their character is uncommon. He follows the impulse of fancy and inclination in the choice of another—whom he calls and esteems his *Friend*. To him both he expose his heart—to his guidance he commits his conduct—and is again the dupe of fraud and subtlety. He feels all the galling stings of falsehood. In the bitterness of his sorrow he ex-claims

§ The stores of antiquity afford not a more elegantly pathetic piece

claims, " § It is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour—for then I could have born it ! —neither was it mine mine adversary that did magnify himself against me — for then, peradventure, I *could* have hid myself from him. But it was even thou, my guide, my companion and my own familiar friend. We took sweet counsel together and walked in the house of God as friends."

For a few days he hates, he scorns, and yet he loves his fellow creatures. Self love will not long permit him to hate his kind. The most unlimited benevolence resumes her throne, and he rejoices in her sway. The torments of distrust are known no more. In their stead, the purest tranquility fills his breast, and the wish of rendering mankind happy, returns with its largest effect upon himself.

Yet is he by no means exempted from the general sentence of trouble. The passions reign with stronger force. His opportunities of indulgence will probably be more frequent, his power, perhaps his inclination of restraining them weaker than in any other period of life. Their flows will be productive of the much *real* disquietude to aggrieve the moments when they ebb ; and not only these nearer ones, but their influence shall also be extended in afflictive circumstances to the time when they almost cease to exist. If such be the condition of youth, is he exempt from trouble ?

I dwell not upon the very numerous accidental evils which befall him here. They are obvious to every person: every age is equally obnoxious to them.

When we consider the delusive hopes of happiness which we fondly indulged, we cannot but
give

than the first fifteen verses of the fifty-fifth Psalm. It is the language of simplicity and nature on the desertion of a beloved "familiar friend."

give our assent to the observation of the *poet, '*Youth flies away like*' the remembrance of '*a Dream.*'

Happiness must be situated beyond the reach of time, change or accident, or it loses its existence. In the gaudy days of mirth, festivity and sprightliness, therefore, man is born to trouble.

If we change the scene a little, and behold him yet in the pride and glory of life, we shall find little reason of exultation, for calamities will press upon him. His passions, indeed, are generally more under the guidance of reason, and directed to proper objects; their limits circumscribed, their impetuosity little abated. His attachments to life are stronger, but they blunt not the sense of his miseries. Often do they give them a keener edge. He appears as the head, the father of a family; as such, he must *feel* for others. The tender charities, which are universally allowed to be the fruitfulest sources of human happiness, will sometimes conspire to cloud his brow, and rend his heart with anguish; and *that* sorrow, which originates from the fancied spring of our most exalted joys, must doubtlessly torment us most exquisitely.

But supposing that all his life long, he finds these charities invariably tend to give him the truest satisfaction that is compatible with imperfection, by the proper behaviour of those with whom he is connected, yet will he find abundant proof that "the days of the years of his life have been few and full of evil." This behaviour in his relatives will chain his affections to this world. He will tremble at the thoughts of being snatched from them, while his assistance or counsels may be necessary to their well being. This will be his trouble,

* Theocritus. St. Paul quotes Aratus Acts 17. 28. and Epimenides in Titus 1. 12.

ble, and it is by no means a slight one.

Admitting the contrary supposition,—That they disregard the still small accents of reason and duty, and rush with impetuous career through the mazes of passion and folly to the brink of destruction. Perhaps he sees them precipitated down — unable to save or relieve them. Their follies, even their crimes, are forgotten—His heart bleeds for them. Fancy cannot give an adequate idea of his affliction.

The colouring may probably be too high in this instance, to be invariably just. Ruin and destruction are not always the consequences of neglect of duty. Suppose them to repay all his tender, heart-felt cares with scorn and disregard. Say ye, who have experienced, “How † sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child?” In this respect, therefore, man is surely born to all the energy of trouble.

Others there are that will attack him from within, against which strength and address are of no avail. The pains of complicated diseases may seize him. Strength is borne down, and after many painful struggles seems to conspire with the enemy to bring down all his honours to the dust. What is his life here, but vanity and trouble? Let experience determine.—

He begins to find a striking likeness in the days of life. That tho' the scene is perpetually varied, it is only so varied as to hurry him on through all the changes of distress and misery.

He still cherishes the expectation that the joys of to-morrow will more than compensate for the disquietudes of to-day. To-morrow comes—but the promised felicity is still to come. At length he feels

† Shakspeare.

feels that sickness of heart surpassing all description, which, as the wise man affirms, springs from hope deferred.

Happy, beyond all names of happiness, is it for him, if from discovering these illusions, he can learn to moderate his wishes, and circumscribe his desires within the limits of reason and nature ! This, *and this alone* can deprive disappointments, and even the severest afflictions of their tormenting power, and enable him to bear them with a becoming fortitude.

If he escape the foes of life which attack the days of infancy, youth and manhood (tho' by far the greatest part of mankind are unable to withstand them) and arrive at old age, he will find abundant reason to believe it a ** perpetual disease*; for then his § days will be but labour and sorrow.

The † years are come which afford him no pleasure. To him the genial influence of the sun, and the faint but composed lustre of the moon are void of charms. The faculties of mind and body are hastening to their original nothing. Though he be less able to bear them, cares and troubles croud faster, and oppress him with additional force. The firmest parts of the body are damaged by age: and the consequent relaxation of the nerves, so that they become incapable of the uses for which they were originally designed. The senses fail. The eyes, deeply sunk in their sockets, which almost resemble vacant holes, *shall be darkened*. Taste and appetite decay together. The ravishing strains of harmony delight him no more; And, which

* Senectus ipsa est Morbus-----

Terent. Phor.

§ Psalm 90, 10.

† Eccles. 12, 1—9 explained by Dr. Mead in Medica Sacra cap. 6. whom I have followed.

which is still worse, by the decay of hearing he becomes incapable of enjoying the sweets of friendly conversation. Thus the greatest enjoyments of life are lost. The touch, or feeling may be regarded as a preservative from many of the evils to which we are perpetually exposed. Of this also, time in a great measure bereaves us. A like fate awaits the smell. *The almond tree shall flower* and exhale it's sweets in vain. Sleep is the sweetest soother of our toils, the restorer of our exhausted strength ; but the *old man* shall rise up at the voice of the bird, that is, at the first crowing of the cock. His Sleep, therefore, is short and interrupted, tho' his weakness requires longer repose.

The whole Body is afflicted. The course of the blood is intercepted ; whence man is seized with difficulty of breathing, apoplexies or lethargies. The heart also, the principle and fountain of life, sinks thro' want of its' usual force, and the broken chariot falls into the pit." In a word the body returns to it's earth, and the spirit to God who gave it.

These woes are too sadly real. But even those of imagination will extort a commiserating tear from the eye of the benevolent. He cannot, therefore, be guilty of that wantonness of cruelty, the augmenting human miseries by his improper conduct, and irregular sallies of passion.

His slightest observations will convince him that the troubles of each individual, in every period of life, are sufficient to exercise all his patience and fortitude.—He will not, cannot *heap up words against the afflicted*, knowing that bitter taunts are more severely felt, than the sharpest flings of affliction—He will soothe them with his friendly counsels, and pour, at least, the healing balm of pity in-

to their wounds. He will feel for, and with them. And the sufferers knowledge that his friends sympathizes with him will suffuse a serene melancholy kind of tranquility thro' his soul. It will encrease with time, until sorrow is known no longer.

Thus the benevolent enjoy a sovereign power over the calamities of those with whom they are connected. Their offices of love are not confined to any particular set of beings, or orders of men—Like the sun do they cheer and enliven the whole creation. And the joys which they diffuse into others Breasts will return with tenfold transports into their own.

Yet such is the frailty of the human condition!—These are by no means exempted from their share of the better cup of affliction, from experiencing the greatest part of the evils already enumerated.

Surely, then, “man at his best estate is altogether vanity. He flourisheth as a flower of the field, but as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.”

It is happily necessary, indeed, that we make a small allowance for the few fortunate moments of our lives. The rest may generally be added to the account of trouble.

To such changes and calamitous vicissitudes as these even the very best good men are obnoxious. To the rational and well instructed mind, therefore, they point out an hereafter, and indicate an eternity of happiness reserved for those who are unwearied in well-doing. Otherwise we deprive *God* of his most amiable and endearing attributes. We represent him in awful, dreadful terrors, not as the kind, merciful and benevolent parent of all the tribes and families of the earth. Thus we lose
the

the only virtuous and laudable incentive to action—That of love. For not even he, who spoke the universe into existence, could cause beings, constituted as we are, to love and serve him truly all the days of our lives, unless we had reason to believe him beneficent. And if beneficent—which every appearance in nature irrefragably proves—he must reward those who make his law the guide of their lives either in this or some future state of existence. That we have very little reason to exult on the score of felicity in this life hath already been fully proved. Whence it follows that the most perfectly virtuous man must expect his reward beyond the grave.

If we are capable of being allured to our Duty it must be by this Belief, and frequently meditating on the divine attributes. By representing God to ourselves in such a manner as must excite our love of him, and admiration of his glorious perfections.

Thus shall we, in imitation of him, be merciful, kind compassionate. Knowing that man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, we shall earnestly and invariably endeavour to perfect our moral character, and to wipe away all tears from off all faces, being assured that with what measure we mete unto others with the same it shall be measured unto us again.

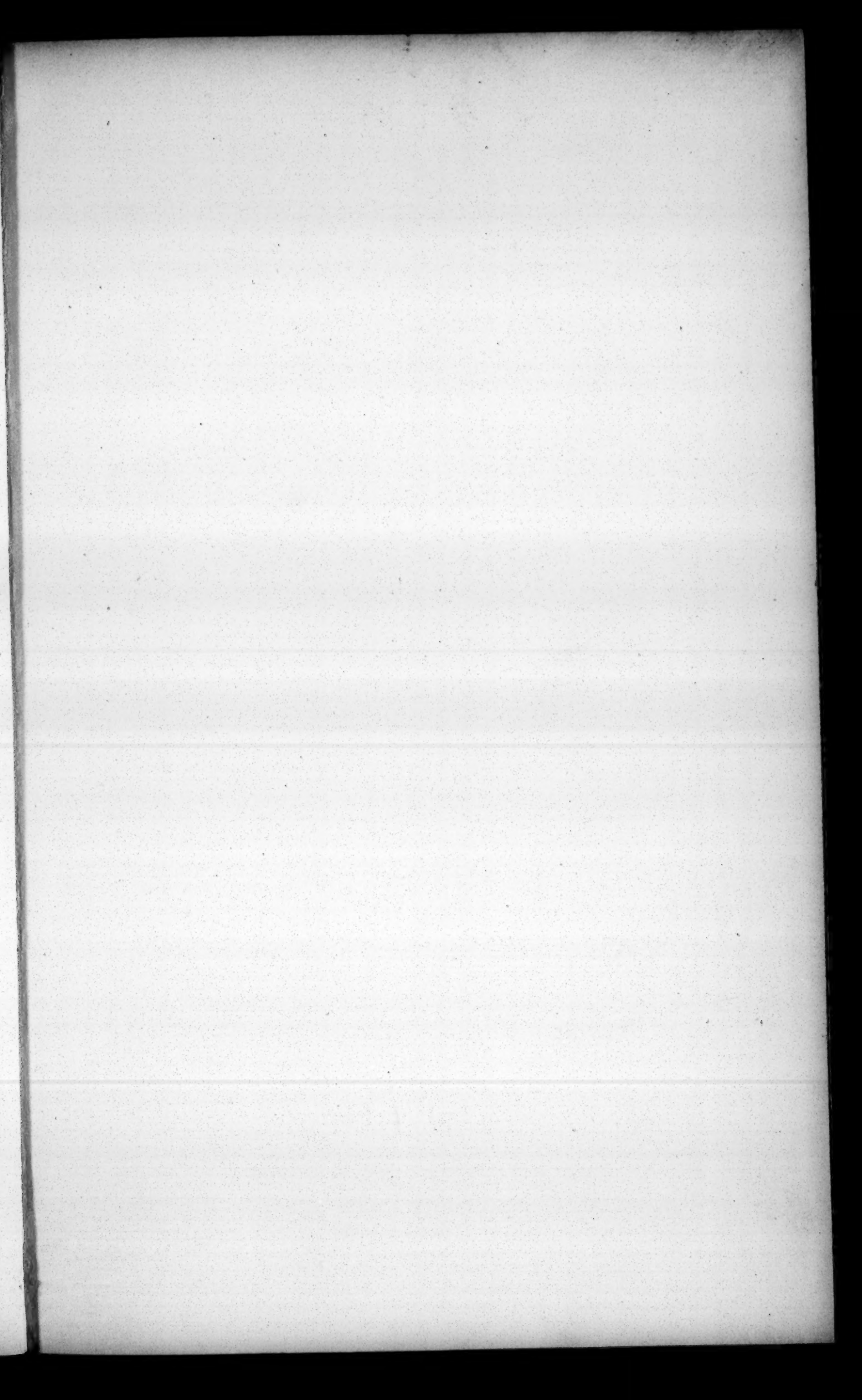
Price 1s,

There are some obvious Errors of the Press in the preceding Sheets, which the Author hopes the Reader will candidly correct.

The publication of his **EFFUSIONS** of the **HEART** and **FANCY** hath been retarded by some unforeseen occurrences. The Volume is now in the Press and will shortly be ready for the Subscribers.

10 July 1778.

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